

NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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PILOT PROGRAM IN JEFFERSON TO CONTROL JAPANESE KNOTWEED
INVASIVE BAMBOO-LIKE PLANT AFFECTS ROAD SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE

It was brought to New England for ornamental gardens, but Japanese knotweed can wreak havoc on natural habitats. This invasive plant, which looks like bamboo and can grow up to 10 feet tall, can also affect the safety and maintenance along New Hampshire's roadways, as well as threaten wetland areas.

Beginning in late July, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation will conduct a pilot control project for Japanese knotweed, a non-native plant that is on the State's "Prohibited Invasive Species" list. Working in the Town of Jefferson, in cooperation with the Jefferson Conservation Commission, the NH Department of Agriculture, the USDA Forest Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the NHDOT project will consist of treating 12 patches of knotweed located along a three-mile section of NH Route 115. Three different types of control methods will be used. Two methods involve cutting each stem and treating the cut stem with herbicide. The third method will involve injecting herbicide directly into each hollow stem with a special tool. Since all three methods involve treating each stem individually, the threat to other species is very minimal.

Volunteers organized by the Jefferson Conservation Commission will assist NHDOT staff by collecting and disposing of cut stems, as well as monitoring the treated patches over the next year. The project will help the New Hampshire Department of Transportation get an understanding of what it will take to implement control of Japanese knotweed on a larger scale.

According to the "Invasive Plant Atlas of New England", Japanese Knotweed (also known as Mexican bamboo) is native to China, Japan and Korea but can be found in the eastern United States from Maine to Georgia. It was most likely brought to America via Great Britain in the early 1900's for use as a horticultural plant.

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